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COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCES
Organizational session for 1995

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda.

3. Organization of work for 1995.

4. Programme of work for 1995.

5. Other business.

ANNOTATIONS

1. Election of officers

Rule 103 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly provides that committees other than Main Committees:

> "... shall elect a Chairman, one or more Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. These officers shall be elected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, experience and personal competence".

In past years, the Committee on Conferences has elected, in addition to the Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

At its organizational session for 1989, on 1 March 1989, the Committee agreed in principle that henceforth the chairmanship would rotate annually among the regional groups.

2. Adoption of the agenda

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3. Organization of work for 1995

At its 341st meeting, on 27 August 1992, the Committee on Conferences decided to maintain its biennial programme of work, dealing with items relating to documentation in even years, and those relating to meetings in odd years. The Committee also decided that some items would be considered on an annual basis.

At its organizational session for 1994, on 8 April 1994, the Committee adopted its agenda for 1994 and requested the Secretariat to submit a draft biennial agenda for 1995-1996 to the Committee at its organizational session for 1995.

At its substantive session of 1994, the Committee decided that requests for inter-sessional departures submitted to the Committee should, in future, be reviewed by the Bureau, in consultation with the Secretariat, for subsequent action.

Moreover, meetings may be required in compliance with paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 35/10 A of 3 November 1980, by which the proposals affecting the schedule of conferences and meetings made during sessions of the Assembly shall be reviewed by the Committee when administrative implications are being considered under the requirements of rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly.

In its decision 1988/103 of 5 February 1988, the Economic and Social Council decided to invite the Committee to review the Council's draft biennial calendar of conferences and meetings and to submit, as appropriate, its recommendations thereon to the Council. It is envisaged that the Committee may therefore be required to meet in mid-1995 to review the Council's draft calendar for the biennium 1996-1997.

4. Programme of work for 1995

The terms of reference of the Committee are set forth in paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 43/222 B of 21 December 1988. As noted above, the Committee adopted its agenda for 1994 at its organizational session for 1994 and requested the Secretariat to submit a draft biennial agenda for 1995-1996 to the Committee at its organizational session for 1995.

Annexed to the present document is the draft agenda for the biennium, followed by a draft annotated agenda for 1995, which takes into account the earlier decisions of the Committee and subsequent decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly. The Committee may also wish to determine the timing and duration of its substantive session of 1995 and to specify the documentation requirements.

5. Other business

Annex

DRAFT AGENDA FOR 1995

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. Calendar of conferences and meetings:

   (a) Adoption of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings for 1996-1997;

   (b) Improved utilization of conference-servicing resources:

      (i) Meeting statistics of United Nations organs;

      (ii) Conference services at Vienna;

      (iii) Existing conference resources, services and facilities within the United Nations;

   (c) Consideration of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings of subsidiary organs of the Economic and Social Council for 1996-1997;

   (d) Requests for exceptions to section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243.

3. Control and limitation of documentation: provision of written meeting records to subsidiary organs of the General Assembly.

4. Improved coordination of conferences within the United Nations system: implementation of General Assembly resolution 43/222 B, paragraph 4 (f).

5. Meetings of organs and programmes not funded from the regular budget of the United Nations.

6. Application of new technology to conference servicing.

7. Review of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997: Conference services.

8. Other business.

9. Adoption of the report.

DRAFT AGENDA FOR 1996

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. Calendar of conferences and meetings:

   (a) Adoption of the draft revised calendar of conferences and meetings for 1997;

   (b) Improved utilization of conference-servicing resources: meeting statistics of United Nations organs;

   (c) Requests for exceptions to section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243.

3. Control and limitation of documentation.

4. United Nations publications policy: implementation of General Assembly resolution 43/222 B, paragraph 4 (h).

5. Review of the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1994-1995: Conference services.

6. Other business.

7. Adoption of the report.

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Annotations for the substantive session of 1995

1. Adoption of the agenda

2. Calendar of conferences and meetings:

   (a) Adoption of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings for 1996-1997

In line with past practice, the Committee on Conferences will submit to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session the draft calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 1996-1997.

In paragraph 18 of its resolution 46/190 of 20 December 1991, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its forty-seventh session and as appropriate at subsequent sessions, through the Committee on Conferences and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, a consolidated statement relating to the number and costs of scheduled special conferences, bearing in mind the annual limit of five as set out in resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985 and endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986. The requested report, containing information on the special conferences scheduled for 1996, will be submitted to the Committee at its substantive session.

At its 367th meeting, on 23 August 1994, the Committee on Conferences requested the Secretariat to submit to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, through the Committee, a synoptic table by sector of meetings held during the bienniums 1992-1993 and 1994-1995 (using projections for the second half of 1995), including the notional cost of conference services provided, as well as a breakdown of meeting services and documentation costs. The requested table will be submitted to the Committee at its substantive session.

(b) Improved utilization of conference-servicing resources:

(i) Meeting statistics of United Nations organs

Since 1983, the Committee on Conferences has studied a series of reports showing the meeting statistics of a number of United Nations organs in New York, Geneva and Vienna. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 44/196 A of 21 December 1989, the General Assembly requested the Committee to review the methodology on conference-servicing utilization rates in order to provide, if possible, a more accurate assessment of the overall use of conference resources with a view to enabling United Nations bodies to make the optimum use of conference services and to facilitate, where necessary, continued rationalization of their meeting requirements.

At its 323rd meeting, on 28 August 1990, the Committee on Conferences agreed to put into experimental use a newly proposed methodology to run parallel with the existing methodology for the next three years.

At its 341st meeting, on 27 August 1992, the Committee, inter alia, requested the Secretariat to expand the representational sample of bodies included in future papers on the experimental methodology and to provide a historical perspective of the trends perceived in all future reports on the utilization of conference-servicing resources.

At its 348th meeting, on 18 May 1993, the Committee agreed to continue with the experimental methodology, and requested the Secretariat to expand the information presented to include analyses of trends perceived and capacity utilization figures.

In paragraph 7 of its resolution 48/222 A of 23 December 1993, the General Assembly welcomed the decision of the Committee to continue the experimental methodology in respect of the utilization of conference-servicing resources, and requested the Secretariat to expand the information presented to include analyses of trends and figures on the utilization of conference-servicing capacity.

At its 369th meeting, on 24 August 1994, the Committee requested the Secretariat to expand the core sample in the statistical analysis to include the Main Committees of the General Assembly and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. It also requested the Secretariat to include in future reports figures on the capacity utilization of conference services (for interpretation and documentation) in New York, Geneva and Vienna.

In view of earlier decisions of the Committee, the aforementioned request of the General Assembly and the requests made by the Committee at its substantive session of 1994, the Secretariat would propose to submit a written report on meeting statistics in accordance with the methodology agreed upon by the Committee, including an expanded core sample, analyses of trends and figures on the utilization of conference-servicing capacity, and capacity utilization figures.

Also, at its 369th meeting, the Committee again requested its Chairman to consult on its behalf with the chairmen of bodies that had consistently utilized less than the applicable benchmark figure (75 per cent for calendar years 1983 to 1993 and 80 per cent for calendar year 1994) of their allocated resources for the last three sessions, with a view to making appropriate recommendations in order to achieve the optimum utilization of conference-servicing resources. If the Committee so decides, the Secretariat, in consultation with the Chairman, would provide an oral report on the aforementioned consultations.

(ii) Conference services at Vienna

At its 343rd meeting, on 2 March 1993, the Committee decided to consider the question of conference services at Vienna, and requested the Secretariat to prepare a written report thereon, for its substantive session of 1993. At its 351st meeting, on 20 May 1993, the Committee reviewed and took note of a note by the Secretariat on the item (A/AC.172/1993/CRP.5).

The Committee also requested the Secretariat to prepare an extensive background paper describing the origins and evolution of the question, and the two positions taken on it, to be submitted to the Committee at its resumed substantive session of 1993.

At its 356th meeting, on 15 September 1993, the Committee reviewed the requested note (A/AC.172/1993/CRP.5/Add.1). It welcomed the confirmation by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) of that body's agreement in principle to participate in unified conference services administered by the United Nations, and urged the Secretary-General to conclude the negotiations as quickly as possible. Moreover, the Committee decided to remain seized of the matter.

In paragraph 14 of its resolution 48/222 A, the General Assembly reiterated its view, expressed in section VIII of its resolution 44/201 A of 21 December 1989, on the desirability of the establishment of unified conference services at Vienna and, in that context, stressed that the combined financial burden for providing conference services to the United Nations Office at Vienna and UNIDO should, in the long run, benefit from the unification agreement, and urged the Secretary-General to conclude the negotiations with UNIDO in that regard as quickly as possible and to report thereon to the Assembly no later than at its forty-ninth session.

At its 366th meeting, on 22 August 1994, in the context of paragraph 14 of resolution 48/222 A, the Committee considered and took note of a note by the Secretariat on the question.

Revised estimates for conference services at Vienna were submitted in document A/C.5/49/24. The Fifth Committee subsequently decided to postpone consideration of the item until its resumed forty-ninth session.

If the Committee on Conferences so decides, the Secretariat would present, at the substantive session of 1995, an oral report containing updated information on the item.

(iii) Existing conference resources, services and facilities within the United Nations

At its substantive sessions of 1990, 1991 and 1993, the Committee considered reports of the Secretary-General on existing conference resources, services and facilities within the United Nations. At its 350th meeting, on 19 May 1993, the Committee requested the Secretariat to provide further analysis, including data on the level of the staff posts listed in the report before it (A/AC.172/152 and Corr.1), on the nature of the meetings convened and on capacity utilization at each of the headquarters, regional commissions and other organizations and on comparative costs of meetings in New York, Geneva and Vienna, and further information on facilities provided free of charge by Governments or organizations within and outside the United Nations system.

If the Committee so decides, the Secretariat would prepare a revised version of the reports on existing conference resources, services and facilities within the United Nations, including the information requested by the Committee at its substantive session of 1993.

(c) Consideration of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings of subsidiary organs of the Economic and Social Council for 1996-1997

The Economic and Social Council, in its decision 1988/103, invited the Committee to review the Council's draft biennial calendar of conferences and meetings and to submit, as appropriate, its recommendations thereon to the Council. The draft calendar for the biennium 1996-1997, which is to be submitted to the Council at its substantive session in June-July 1995, is expected to be available for consideration by the Committee in early June 1995. The Committee may wish to consider meeting at that time in order to discuss the draft and to convey its observations to the Council.

(d) Requests for exceptions to section I, paragraph 7, of General Assembly resolution 40/243

In paragraph 15 of its resolution 47/202 A of 22 December 1992, the General Assembly demanded that all subsidiary organs of the Assembly comply with the provisions of section I, paragraph 7, of its resolution 40/243, whereby the Assembly decided that no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly may meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

In accordance with the procedure established by the Committee at its 1986 session, and reaffirmed at its 1992 session, chairmen of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly that wish to meet at Headquarters during regular sessions

of the Assembly submit their requests to the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences. Requests so received would be considered by the Committee on the basis of a conference room paper. It should be noted that the conference room paper would be issued as requests are received, i.e., after the six-week rule for issuance of pre-session documentation.

3. Control and limitation of documentation: provision of written meeting records to subsidiary organs of the General Assembly

In paragraph 3 of its resolution 49/221 B of 23 December 1994, the General Assembly requested the following bodies to submit, in accordance with existing procedures, to the Assembly at its fiftieth session, through the Committee on Conferences, justifications for the continuation of the current entitlement to meeting records:

(a) United Nations Administrative Tribunal (when holding oral hearings);

(b) Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;

(c) First Committee;

(d) Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

(e) Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly that meet on the occasion of international days of solidarity proclaimed by the General Assembly;

(f) Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

If the Committee so decides, the Secretariat would submit a report containing the replies submitted by the above-mentioned bodies in accordance with the Assembly's request.

4. Improved coordination of conferences within the United Nations system: implementation of General Assembly resolution 43/222 B, paragraph 4 (f)

At its 300th meeting, on 24 August 1989, the Committee requested the Secretariat to examine the current status of coordination, identifying any difficulties or problems and suggesting possible solutions with a view to making the necessary improvements. The Committee further requested its Chairman to address a letter to the Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) in order to avail itself of the opportunity to benefit from that Committee's views. Subsequently, the Organizational Committee of ACC decided to refer the matter to the Inter-Agency Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications.

In paragraph 16 of its resolution 48/222 A, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, as Chairman of ACC, through the established mechanism of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications, to enhance system-wide coordination of conference activities,

including coordination of meeting schedules, with a view to optimizing the use of available conference services, resources and facilities, with due regard to quality, and making possible the effective participation of Member States, and to report on the results achieved to the Assembly at its fiftieth session, through the Committee on Conferences.

If the Committee so decides, the Secretariat would submit the requested report at the substantive session of 1995.

5. Meetings of organs and programmes not funded from the regular budget of the United Nations

At its 328th meeting, on 19 August 1991, the Committee decided to return to this matter as and when necessary, depending on further developments with regard to the provision of conference services. Subsequently, in paragraph 19 of its resolution 46/190, the General Assembly requested the Committee to continue to monitor the meeting services provided to organs and programmes not funded from the regular budget and to consider the impact of their scheduling on the calendar of conferences and meetings.

In paragraph 9 of its resolution 47/202 A, the General Assembly invited the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to continue to evaluate their meeting and documentation requirements, with a view to rationalizing them, and to report on progress thereon to the Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Committee on Conferences.

In paragraph 3 of its resolution 48/222 A, the General Assembly invited the Executive Board of UNICEF and the Governing Council of UNDP to increase their efforts to rationalize their meeting and documentation requirements with a view to reducing them to the maximum extent possible. In paragraph 4, it also invited the Executive Board and the Governing Council to consider dispensing with summary records.

As the Executive Boards of UNICEF and UNDP/UNFPA have resolved to dispense with summary records, and in view of the great strides made by the two bodies towards rationalizing their meeting and documentation requirements, as documented by the Secretariat in previous reports submitted to the Committee, the Committee may wish to decide not to include this matter in its agenda.

6. Application of new technology to conference servicing

At its 328th meeting, on 19 August 1991, the Committee decided to continue monitoring the applications of new technology in the area of conference servicing, taking into account the conclusions and observations agreed upon by the Committee.

At its 346th meeting, on 17 May 1993, the Committee drew attention to the importance of forecasting and planning, and requested the Secretariat to include in a report information on the long-range plan and the detailed time-frame for the introduction of each new application of new technology at each duty station.

If the Committee so decides, the Secretariat would submit a written report including the information requested.

7. Review of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997: Conference services

At its 327th meeting, on 12 June 1991, the Committee decided to review the relevant programme narrative of the proposed programme budgets for conference and library services, and to provide its views thereon to the General Assembly.

In the light of that decision, the Committee may wish to consider, at its substantive session of 1995, the relevant programme narrative of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997: Conference services.

8. Other business

In paragraph 7 of its resolution 49/221 B, the General Assembly took note of the content of annex II to the report of the Committee on Conferences, a/ and requested the Secretariat to follow up on it and to report thereon to the Committee at its substantive session of 1995.

If the Committee so decides, the Secretariat would present an oral report on the matter at the substantive session of 1995.

9. Adoption of the report

Notes

a/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 32 (A/49/32/Rev.1).

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4. Programme of work for 1995

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A draft agenda for the biennium and a draft annotated agenda for 1995 will be issued as an addendum to the present document. The Committee may also wish to determine the timing and duration of its substantive session of 1995 and to specify the documentation requirements.

Notes

1/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 32 (A/47/32).